REMARKS

The Office Action mailed October 26, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the following remarks have been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application.

Reconsideration of the restriction requirement imposed under 35 U.S.C. § 121 is respectfully requested.

A restriction was imposed to elect one of the following inventions for examination purposes:

Group I, Claims 1-12, drawn to an apparatus, classified in Class 68, Subclass 12.18; and

Group II, Claims 13-24, drawn to a method, classified in Class 134, Subclass 33.

The Examiner alleges that the inventions are distinct because "[i]nventions II and I are related as process and apparatus for its practice. ... The apparatus of group I can be used to perform a method which is independent of time; therefore, the apparatus of group I can be used to practice another materially different process than that described in group II." As such the Examiner alleges that it would be a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction is not required because the inventions require a different field of search.

Applicants elect, with traverse, Group I, Claims 1-12, for prosecution on the merits.
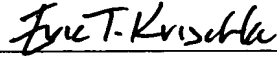
The requirement for election is traversed.

MPEP section 803 states that if "the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions."

Applicants respectfully submit that the search and examination of the entire application (Groups I and II) can be made without serious burden. For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request examination of Groups I and II.

In addition, requirements for election are not mandatory under 35 U.S.C. § 121. Accordingly, reconsideration of the restriction requirement is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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